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# From Emancipation to Equality: Alexander Clark's Stand for Civil Rights in Iowa

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ALEXANDER CLARK was the son of emancipated slaves. Born in Pennsylvania in 1826, Clark moved to Cincinnati at age thirteen to live with an uncle who taught him the barbering trade and sent him to grammar school where he "got a fair smattering of the common branches of education."[1] In October 1841, Clark boarded the steamer *George Washington* and, as a bartender, headed south on the Ohio River. The following May he traveled north on the Mississippi and landed in Muscatine, Iowa, where he would live for the next forty-two years working as a barber, entrepreneur, orator, lawyer, newspaper editor—and an unyielding voice for civil rights.

Clark came to Iowa at a time when "colored people"[2] were considered unfit to vote, hold elected office, or attend public schools. Recognizing the chasm between freedom and equality, Clark battled to overturn Iowa's discriminatory laws and desegregate public schools. He also fought against the intangible obstacles to full equality: fear, hatred, apathy, prejudice, stereotypes, and the pervasive idea of white supremacy. Living by example, Clark worked toward "the time when a man will be esteemed at his true worth without regard to circumstances or race or birth."[3]

## Alexander Clark's Iowa

The territorial government banned slavery in 1838, but being against slavery did not mean whites in Iowa believed all races were equal. Some Iowans opposed slavery on moral and religious grounds but "viewed African Americans as inferior to whites and believed that the two races should be kept apart."[4] Many white southerners who settled in Iowa opposed slavery in the territory because it represented an economic evil. Coming north to escape a plantation system that favored wealthy men, "they were far from ready to share with the Negro the rights and privileges they expected to enjoy on the new frontier."[5] Early political leaders viewed slave ownership as a status symbol and ignored laws that prohibited slavery in Iowa. John Chambers, the second territorial governor, arrived from Kentucky in 1841 "accompanied by a small troop of slaves."[6] Slave owners entering Iowa kept their slaves ignorant of the fact that when they stepped foot on Iowa soil they were free.[7]



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Fearing that Iowa could become a "dumping ground" for manumitted southern slaves,[8] legislators drafted what became known as Iowa's "Black Codes" to keep free blacks out. Laws enacted in 1839 required blacks to produce a certificate of freedom and post a $500 bond.[9] Black males were not allowed to vote, join the territorial militia or serve in the legislature. Blacks could not serve as witnesses against white defendants in court cases, were not eligible for statutory relief, and could not attend public schools. In 1840, the legislature banned interracial marriages.[10]

Delegates to Iowa's Constitutional Convention in 1844 formed a committee to deal with "a petition...for the admission of people of color on the same footing as white citizens."[11] They also considered a provision that would prohibit blacks from settling in Iowa. The committee agreed in theory "that all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with equal unalienable rights, and that these rights are as sacred to the black man as the white man...."[12] However, they viewed equality as an abstract proposition, arguing that government is a man-made association that "changes or modifies...his natural rights. Some are surrendered, some are modified."[13]

Fewer than 100 blacks lived in Iowa in 1844 (compared to 30,000 whites), but convention delegates feared what could happen if they allowed unrestricted black emigration. Iowa, they concluded, "can never consent to open the doors of our beautiful State and invite [negroes] to settle our lands. The policy of other States would drive the whole black population of the Union upon us."[14]

When Alexander Clark opened his barber shop in Muscatine[15] in 1842, Iowa was "one of the most racist territories in the North."[16] Clark, however, saw Iowa as a land of opportunity. He bought timberland along the river bottom and negotiated contracts to provide wood for the lucrative steamboat market. At a time when most blacks in Iowa took menial, low paying jobs, Clark challenged the status quo. In his twenties, Clark married, started a family, invested in real estate, helped organize Muscatine's African Methodist Episcopal Church, and launched his campaign for civil rights.

Clark attended the 1853 National Colored Convention in Rochester, New York, an assembly Frederick Douglass called "the largest and most enlightened colored convention that...ever assembled in this country."[17] Delegates believed slavery and discrimination could not be tolerated in a nation founded on principles of democracy and freedom. Clark brought the fight for equality to Iowa, initiating a petition campaign in 1855 to overturn an exclusionary law that prohibited "the immigration of free negroes into this state."[18]

In 1857 Clark gathered 122 signatures from blacks and whites on a petition to repeal Iowa's Black Laws and was one of thirty-three delegates to a black convention held in Muscatine. Delegates demanded full citizenship, agreeing that education was essential to "the moral and political elevation of the colored race."[19] Black suffrage emerged as a primary issue of Iowa's 1857 constitutional convention. Voters rejected black suffrage, but Clark did not abandon the fight.

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## Strike the Word "White"

Once the Civil War began, Iowa provided large numbers of men for the Union Army. In 1862, Clark asked Iowa Governor Samuel Kirkwood for permission to recruit a company of black volunteers, but was told it was "a white man's war."[20] President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 changed everything. Clark recruited 1,153 blacks for the 1st Iowa Volunteers of African Descent (later designated the 60th Regiment Infantry, United States Colored Troops) and was chosen as the regiment's sergeant-major.[21]

Following the war, people of African descent were no longer defined by their status as slaves. "Even in the Midwest, whites and African-Americans alike understood that this moment put everyone's rights and privileges, as well as black subordination and white supremacy, in question."[22] Black soldiers fought and died alongside whites in defense of the Union and Clark knew the time was right to fight for suffrage. On October 31, 1865, seven hundred members of the 60th U.S. Infantry Colored Regiment met at Camp McClellan in Davenport, Iowa, electing Clark president of the convention. "Now, my friends, we have a work to perform...a duty we owe to ourselves and to our race, in asking for those political rights of which we are now deprived," Clark stated.[23] Suffrage, he believed, was key to full participation in a free society.

> [W]e have discharged our duty as soldiers in the defense of our country, [and] respectfully urge that it is the duty of Iowa to allow us the use of our votes at the polls.... [H]e who is worthy to be trusted with the musket can and ought to be trusted with the ballot.[24]

The convention drafted a petition that Clark delivered to the capitol during Iowa's next General Assembly asking legislators to strike the word "white" from constitutional requirements for voting. The document also admonished blacks to pursue "education, industry, and thrift that would certainly be rewarded with increasing intelligence and wealth," while cautioning blacks "to abstain from the use of intoxicating drink." Blacks fighting for civil rights in Iowa also fought against the stereotype that they were "lazy and good-for-nothing."[25] With the petition, Clark delivered an address to all Iowans:

> Fellow Countrymen: We wish we could truthfully address you as "fellow citizens."... We appeal to the justice of the people and of the Legislature of our State, for those rights of citizenship without which our well-earned freedom is but a shadow; ...[give] to us that right without which we have no power to defend ourselves from unjust legislation, and no voice in the Government we have endeavored to preserve.... [I]f we do not get our rights as citizens and voters it is not because we do not deserve and have not fairly earned them, but only because prejudice and wrong still triumph over Truth and Righteousness.[26]

Clark returned to Muscatine believing his trip was not in vain. "I secured the presentation of the petition of the regiment, containing 700 names, together with a petition from the colored citizens of Muscatine numbering 97 names, and one

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from the white citizens numbering 235, making in all over one thousand names praying for universal suffrage."[27]

Clark's campaign for suffrage continued at the Iowa State Colored Convention in Des Moines in February, 1868. Delegates elected Clark secretary and spokesman of an assembly that believed the "tendency toward an enlarged freedom...impresses us with the firm conviction that our claims to universal suffrage and impartial justice at home and abroad will soon be secured to all."[28]

Iowa Republicans responded with a provision in their platform to enfranchise black males, "simply because it was the right and moral position."[29] Democrats firmly opposed black suffrage.[30] A referendum to strike the word "white" in the voting clause of Iowa's constitution came before voters in 1868. The amendment passed, turning Iowa—a state with some of the strictest black codes in the north—into "one of the most egalitarian states in the Union."[31] Clark's unyielding stand for equality helped Iowa become the first state beyond New England to give black males the right to vote. Minnesota soon followed, and those victories began the push for the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.[32]

## The Best Advantages of Learning

For Alexander Clark, "experience was his schoolmaster...and the world his college."[33] He wanted something better for his—and all—children. In Iowa, an 1847 law mandated that "schools would be open and free alike to all white persons in the school district, between the ages of five and twenty-one years."[34] Barriers to education kept blacks illiterate, reinforcing stereotypes about black intelligence.[35]

In 1858, the general assembly required that school boards provide separate schools for black students. Muscatine operated a colored school, but Clark was not satisfied with the quality of education it provided. Ready to publicly chal-

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lenge segregation, Clark sent his 12-year-old daughter, Susan, to a neighborhood white school in September, 1867. She was denied admission. In a letter to the *Muscatine Journal* Clark stated, "My personal object is that my children attend where they can receive the largest and best advantages of learning."[36] He outlined contrasts between Muscatine's white and colored schools. White schools were conveniently located, but the black school was "nearly a mile from many of the small colored children, keeping more than a third of them from school."[37] White schools had adequate supplies and competent, well-paid teachers. The black school did not. The white schools, Clark wrote, "have prepared and qualified pupils by the hundred for the high school; the colored school has never prepared or qualified one that could pass an examination for any class in the high school."[38]

Clark filed a lawsuit in the Muscatine County District Court. The judge issued a writ of mandamus[39] compelling the board of directors to allow Susan to attend the all-white Grammar School No. 2. The board appealed to the Iowa Supreme Court, asserting its right to require colored children in Muscatine to attend the separate school provided. The Supreme Court in 1868 disagreed.

In rendering the majority opinion, Justice J. Cole pointed out that the Constitution of 1857 created a state board of education that was required to "provide for the education of *all the youths of the State*, through a system of common schools."[40] Requiring black students to attend a separate school violated the law which "expressly gives the same rights to *all* the youths."[41]

> The term "colored race" is...a synonym for African. [I]f the board of directors are clothed with a discretion to exclude African children from our common schools, and require them to attend...a school composed wholly of children of that nationality, they would have the same power and right to exclude German, ...Irish, French, English and other nationalities, which together constitute the *American*.... [T]he board cannot...deny a youth admission to any particular school because of his or her nationality, religion, color, clothing or the like.[42]

Within six years of the Iowa Supreme Court's landmark decision, all Iowa schools were open to all children regardless of race, nationality, or religion.[43] Susan Clark's name appeared on the list of Muscatine High School graduates in 1871; her brother, Alexander Jr., followed.[44] Alexander Jr. became the first black graduate of the University of Iowa's law school. At the age of 58, Alexander Sr. became the second.[45]

## A Pen Dipped in Acid

In the years immediately following the Civil War, newspapers still covered events in the black community. However, emotions that ran high during the Civil War diminished and "the special interest and the ready sympathy of earlier days waned; as the Negro population increased, the number of newspaper items devoted to their affairs decreased."[46] Soon the only black news reported in "white" papers focused on crime. This lack of positive coverage led to the formation of "black" newspapers which carried stories that white papers refused to print.

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Clark turned to the black press as a medium to convey his opinions in the ongoing struggle for equality. In July 1882, Clark bought *The Chicago Conservator*.[47] Two years later he became the editor and "wielded a fearless pen...dipped in acid."[48] He spoke out against prejudice and discrimination "wheeling the paper into the ranks of a true radical Republican paper."[49]

Many white Americans thought the solution to "the Negro problem" after emancipation was to send blacks back to Africa. Liberia was established in 1822 as a colony for freed U.S. slaves. Clark opposed colonization: "We are Americans by birth and we assure you that we are Americans in feeling, in spite of all the wrongs which we...endured in this our native country...."[50] However, when President Benjamin Harrison appointed Clark as the U.S. Minister to Liberia in 1890, Clark accepted the position because it was the highest presidential appointment ever offered to a black man. Clark died in Liberia in 1891.

## Building a Foundation for Equality

Clark hoped his life would inspire young people, especially blacks, to set worthwhile goals and achieve them in spite of obstacles.[51] By example he discredited the prejudicial and racist attitudes that permeated white society,

*Alexander Clark's story was "rediscovered" during a battle between urban renewal leaders who wanted to demolish "the ambassador's" deteriorating brick home and others who wanted to preserve it. The house was moved to a new location and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.*

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becoming a "symbol of a growing, prosperous black community, not only in the state, but nationwide."[52] He battled against exclusionary laws. He fought to repeal Iowa's Black Codes. And he won. He fought for integrated schools, asserting that separate does not mean equal—a conclusion the United States Supreme Court agreed with almost a century later.

Clark's ambition was "tempered by sound judgment;"[53] discerning *when* to take a stand contributed to his success. Clark demonstrated his political genius by acting when the climate was right to force change, becoming a catalyst in efforts to extend the American idea of democracy to all people. Despite his many victories, racial discrimination "would continue to plague various aspects of African-American Iowans' lives into the next century."[54] Although his accomplishments did not eliminate social and economic injustices, Alexander Clark established legal precedents and a solid foundation upon which later generations could build.

## Notes

1. "Alexander Clark, Esq." *Cleveland Gazette*, 24 March 1888: 1.

2. Throughout my research I encountered terms including Negro, colored people, blacks, and mulattoes used to refer to people of African descent. Alexander Clark is an example of how difficult it can be to classify a person's race. Three of his great-grandparents were white. His father was the son of a mulatto slave and her Irish master. Clark married Catherine Griffin of Iowa City (1848), a woman whose father came from Africa and whose mother was an American Indian.

3. "Alexander Clark, Muscatine." *The United States Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery of Eminent and Self-made Men: Iowa Volume*. Chicago and New York: American Biographical Publishing Company, 1878: 540.

4. Dorothy Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land*. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1996: 68.

5. Leola Nelson Bergmann, *The Negro in Iowa*. Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1969: 7.

6. Robert Dykstra, "Dr. Emerson's Sam: Black Iowans before the Civil War." *Palimpsest* 63 (1982): 69.

7. Iowa was a free territory under the Missouri Compromise (1820). See also: *In the Matter of Ralph (a colored man) on Habeas Corpus. Laws of Iowa*, 1838-39: 65. In its first decision, the Territorial Supreme Court ruled that since Ralph came to Iowa with his master's permission, he was not a fugitive slave. Since the Fugitive Slave Law (1793) did not apply, Ralph was not a slave under Iowa law because Iowa did not recognize slavery. The same would apply to any "slave" in Iowa with his or her master.

8. The laws of slave states often forced manumitted slaves to emigrate or face re-enslavement. See Eugene H. Berwanger, *The Frontier Against Slavery: Western Anti-Negro Prejudice and the Slavery Extension Controversy*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1967: 36.

9. *An Act to Regulate Blacks and Mulattoes*. Reprinted in "The Statute Laws of the Territory of Iowa, enacted at the first session of the Legislative Assembly of said Territory, held at Burlington A.D. 1838-39." *Annals of Iowa* 3 (April 1897):145-57. The $500 bond was to ensure that blacks did not become a public charge.

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10. Berwanger, 36. Iowa's Black Codes were similar to restrictive laws passed in the South following the Civil War.

11. Benjamin F. Shambaugh, *The Constitutions of Iowa*. Iowa City: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1934: 141. The convention's handling of two opposite propositions—one calling for full citizenship for blacks and the other attempting to exclude them completely—is an example of what Dorothy Schwieder called Iowans "consistent inconsistency." While delegates drafted a constitution with many "whites only" restrictions, others in the state (especially Quakers and Congregationalists) helped fugitive slaves escape.

12. Ibid, 144. Delegates to the convention would have preferred to avoid the citizenship question completely. They knew it would not be "expedient" to entirely exclude blacks because that could impact Iowa's chances for statehood.

13. Ibid, 142.

14. Shambaugh, 143. The 1844 Constitution was rejected because Congress "mutilated boundaries" in order to manipulate territory and maintain a balance between prospective free and slave states. In 1846, Iowans accepted a constitution that restored the original state boundaries but maintained the same restrictions for blacks. President Polk signed the bill admitting Iowa as the twenty-ninth state on December 28, 1846.

15. Muscatine was originally called Bloomington. By 1850, Muscatine was known as the "capital of Afro-American Iowa."

16. Robert Dykstra, "White Men, Black Laws: Territorial Iowans and Civil Rights, 1838-1843." *Annals of Iowa* 46 (1982): 403.

17. Frederick Douglas, *Life and times of Frederick Douglass, Written by Himself: His Early Life as a Slave, His Escape from Bondage, and His Complete History to the Present Time*. Hartford, Conn.: Park Publishing Co., 1881: 295. Because disenfranchised blacks were excluded from the political process, they met in conventions to debate issues, consider their options, and assert their rights as American citizens.

18. *Iowa House Journal 1850*: 145. The petition Clark submitted on behalf of "the colored citizens of Muscatine County" to the Iowa General Assembly in 1855 asked them to "repeal the act entitled 'An Act to prohibit the immigration of free negroes into this State.'" (The original petition is in the collections of the State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.) Lawmakers tabled Clark's petition. See *Iowa House Journal 1855*: 319. The Exclusionary Act of 1851 was a matter of record but had never really been enforced. Clark probably knew that the law was not enforced, but saw overturning it as a place to start in taking a public stand for civil rights in Iowa.

19. Robert R. Dykstra, *Bright Radical Star: Black Freedom and White Supremacy on the Hawkeye Frontier*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993: 18, 150-51, 173.

20. William Loren Katz, *Black Pioneers: An Untold Story*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1999: 154.

21. A physical disability kept Alexander Clark from battle, but he was "one of the most active agents in the 'west' gathering recruits for the army and furthering the Union cause." See Marilyn Jackson, "Alexander Clark: A Rediscovered Black Leader." Iowan 23 (Spring 1975): 45.

22. Leslie A. Schwalm, "History Remembered: Scholar Recounts the North's Own Conflicts Over Emancipation and Black Migration." *Arts & Sciences* Magazine (University of Iowa College of Liberal Arts), Fall 2002: 17.

23. Alexander Clark, "Address to the Convention of Colored Iowa Soldiers." *Christian Recorder*, 18 November 1865. Reprinted from *Muscatine Journal*, 6 November 1865.

24. Alexander Clark, quoted in *The Christian Recorder*, 18 November 1865.

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25. Berwanger, 39.

26. Alexander Clark, quoted in *The Christian Recorder*, 18 November 1865.

27. Alexander Clark letter to the editor of *The Christian Recorder* dated 27 January 1866; published 3 February 1866.

28. *Proceedings of the Iowa State Colored Convention Held in the City of Des Moines, Wednesday and Thursday, February 12th and 13th, 1868*. Muscatine, Iowa: Daily Journal Book and Job Printing House, 1868. State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Special Collections: 7.

29. Schwieder, 87.

30. "Iowa Democratic State Convention." *Daily State Register*, 27 February 1868. Democrats adopted a resolution that stated: "[W]e are opposed to conferring the right of suffrage upon the negroes in Iowa, and we deny the right of the general government to interfere with the question of suffrage in any of the States of the Union."

31. Robert R. Dykstra, "The Issue Squarely Met: Toward an Explanation of Iowans' Racial Attitudes, 1865-1868." *Annals of Iowa* 47 (1984): 430.

32. Ratified in 1870, the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granted all men the right to vote regardless of race. See G. Galin Berrier, "The Negro Suffrage Issue in Iowa—1865-1868." *Annals of Iowa* 39 (Spring 1968): 241-261.

33. Rev. J.W. Laws, "Oration on the Life of Hon. Alexander Clark."

34. Arnie Cooper, "A Stony Road: Black Education in Iowa, 1838-1860." *Annals of Iowa* 48 (Winter/Spring 1986): 119-120.

35. Ibid, 122. The 1850 census showed that 31 percent of blacks in Iowa were illiterate, most likely due to low school attendance.

36. *Muscatine Journal*, 31 October 1867.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Mandamus is a writ from a superior court to an inferior governing body. Copies of the original, handwritten documents of Clark's district court lawsuit and the writ issued by that court are available at the Musser Public Library, Muscatine, Iowa.

40. *Clark v. Board of Directors, etc*. 14 April 1868. 24 Iowa 266.

41. *Clark v. Board of Directors, etc*. 24 Iowa 266.

42. Ibid.

43. "African-American Iowans: 1830s-1970s." *The Goldfinch* 16 (Summer 1995): 6.

44. *History of Muscatine County*. Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1897: 541.

45. About a month before Alexander Clark Jr. entered the University of Iowa College of Law in August 1878, the Clarks' first home in Muscatine burned. The upper floor was gutted and the lower story damaged beyond repair. Arson was suspected. A brick house was built in its place, but Clark's wife, Catherine, died before it was completed. Alexander Jr. graduated from law school in 1879. Alexander Sr. earned his law degree in 1884.

46. Bergmann, 44.

47. Founded by F.L. Barnett in 1878, *The Chicago Conservator* was the first black paper in Chicago. NAACP founder Ida B. Wells worked for *The Conservator* before purchasing the newspaper in 1895.

48. Marilyn Jackson. "Alexander Clark: A Rediscovered Black Leader." *Iowan* 23 (Spring 1975): 49.

49. *The Phylaxis*. Volume II, Number 2. Jefferson City, Mo., March 1975: 65.

50. *Proceedings of the Iowa State Colored Convention Held in the City of Des Moines, Wednesday and Thursday, February 12th and 13th, 1868*. Muscatine, Iowa: Daily Journal Book and Job Printing House, 1868: 12.

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51. Marilyn Jackson, "Alexander Clark: A Rediscovered Black Leader." *Iowan* 23 (Spring 1975): 52.
52. Stephen Byrd, "Seminar Takes Audience on a Journey through Iowa's Black History." *Muscatine Journal*, 23 February 2004.
53. Rev. J.W. Laws, "Oration on the Life of Hon. Alexander Clark."
54. Bill Silag, ed. *Outside In: African-American History in Iowa, 1838-2000*. Des Moines: State Historical Society of Iowa, 2001: 367.

## Annotated Bibliography

### — Primary Sources —

#### *Historic Site*

**Alexander Clark House, Muscatine, Iowa. 8 March 2006.**

Today, Alexander Clark is not well-known in Iowa—or elsewhere—despite his significant accomplishments and the many victories he won in battles for black civil rights in the 19th century. When his house in Muscatine was threatened with demolition, the people who took a stand to save the house also revived interest Clark's story. Saving the house helped resurrect an important chapter in Iowa history. Clark's stands for equality crossed state boundaries as he worked on civil rights issues with national implications. For me, being in a place connected with events from history helps give history an added dimension. While talking with Kent Sissel, who owns the Clark House, I gained a better understanding of how we sometimes learn the forgotten stories of local history when a city wants to tear down "old" buildings. The stories, pieces in the puzzle of a community's history, often emerge as the fates of old places are discussed. The Clark House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

#### *Archival Materials*

**1855 Petition to the Iowa General Assembly by the Citizens of Muscatine County. Records of the Secretary of State in the State Archives at the State Historical Society, Des Moines.**

Clark delivered this handwritten petition, signed by black citizens of Muscatine, to the General Assembly in 1855. It asked for the repeal of the 1851 act that outlawed the migration of free blacks to this state. Reading about this document in secondary sources and learning that it was tabled in the *Journal of the House of Representatives* did not compare with actually holding the original document and identifying Clark's and his wife's and oldest daughter's signatures in faded ink.

**Harrison, Benjamin. Letter to Alexander Clark, 2 September 1890. Muscatine Art Center, Muscatine, Iowa.**

President Benjamin Harrison's letter designated Alexander Clark to the position of U.S. Minister to Liberia. This was, at the time, the highest appointive office ever held by a black man and it was interesting to see this handwritten document signed by the president. Few original documents exist—or have been located—related to Alexander Clark.

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**Musser Public Library, Special Collections, Alexander Clark Files.**

I accessed the following primary source materials from the Clark files at the Musser Public Library in Muscatine, Iowa:

**Board of Directors of the Independent District Township of the City of Muscatine, by Wm. Brannan, Attorney for the Defendants. 15 October 1867.**

This handwritten document provides the Board of Directors' answer to the lawsuit filed by Susan B. Clark by her next friend Alexander Clark asking that she be admitted into the public school rather than be forced to attend a colored school in the city. It asserts that the school district is fulfilling its duty to educate resident youth between the ages of five and twenty-one years by maintaining separate schools for the different classes of youth in the city. This document helped me understand the defendant's position in the lawsuit.

**Clark, Alexander. "Centennial Address." Iowa State Convention of Colored Citizens at Exchange Hall. Oskaloosa, Iowa, 4 January 1876.**

Clark, popularly known as "the colored orator of the west," delivered this speech first in Oskaloosa, then again at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This speech was important to my research because it allowed me to "hear" Clark's ideas and convictions in his own words. In the speech he contrasted the ideals of a nation founded on principles of liberty and justice to the reality of a nation that practiced the "dark and damning demon" of slavery. He challenged Americans to, with wisdom, "look back upon the past, view the present, that we may be guided right in the future...."

**Laws, Rev. J.W. "Oration on the Life of Hon. Alexander Clark."**

Rev. Laws, a personal friend and colleague of Alexander Clark, delivered the eulogy at Clark's funeral in Muscatine. This source offered me the viewpoint of someone who knew Clark well in assessing his character and accomplishments.

**Muscatine City Map.**

This undated map was marked to show where Alexander Clark lived at the time of the lawsuit against the Muscatine school board, the location of the black school in the basement of the A.M.E. Church, and the location of Grammar School #2 (the public school Susan would attend after winning the case).

***Muscatine Journal* Clippings. October 1974-December 1978.**

I reviewed a series of articles about the fight to save Alexander Clark's house from destruction. I found it interesting that it was the conflict over whether or not to save the house that got people interested in Clark's legacy. These articles document the struggle that an historical society had to go through in order to save the house from demolition, move it, then sell it due to lack of funds to restore it.

**Ray, Robert D. Governor's Proclamation, 29 April 1979.**

Gov. Ray declared April 29, 1979, as "Alexander Clarke [sic] Recognition Day." This proclamation was intended to honor Clark at a time in Muscatine's history when Clark's story began to attract attention once again. This illustrated for me how the battle over his house shed light on Clark's life.

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**State Department of History and Archives. Undated Document.**

This document was probably issued after a request for census information about Alexander Clark and his family. It contains the 1856 and 1860 census data about the Clark family. The information did not seem that important at first, but then several things became clear because of this data. Susan Clark (plaintiff in the lawsuit that desegregated public schools in Iowa) was not the oldest child in the family; she had a sister, Rebecca, five years older. I later learned from other sources that Rebecca and Susan were educated at home with occasional attendance in the black schools of Muscatine. That Clark waited to pursue school desegregation until his second child was in grammar school shows that he chose to take a stand for equal educational opportunities at a time when they could have the most impact and win the case. The census also showed that James Ruff, a 28-year-old barber born in Tennessee (presumably not related) was living with the Clarks in 1856 but not in 1860. This fits with what I have learned about immigration patterns in Iowa. Ruff probably came to Iowa and lived with the Clarks until he became established in the community and could afford his own home. I also noticed that many published sources list Susan's middle initial as "V." This comes from census data where she is listed as Susan V. Clark. On the court documents related to the school lawsuit, her name (handwritten by Alexander Clark in one place) is Susan B. Clark. I would conclude that the court documents are correct and that the person who gathered the census information did not hear the middle initial correctly.

**Summons to Rev. Oberhouse, President of the Board of Directors of the Independent District Township of the City of Muscatine. 8 October 1867.**

This document was served to notify the Board of Directors on behalf of Susan Clark that she was seeking a writ of mandamus forcing the board to admit her to attend the public schools of the district. Mandamus is a writ from a superior court to an inferior court or other governing body. In Susan Clark's case, the district court sided with her and issued the writ. The board of directors appealed this decision to the Iowa Supreme Court. The summons and other documents in this collection helped me understand the process by which Alexander Clark fought for the right of black children to attend public schools.

**Susan B. Clark by her next friend, Alexander Clark. Petition filed with the State of Iowa, Muscatine County. 3 October 1867.**

The six handwritten pages of this document began the fight for desegregated public schools in Iowa. The petition outlines the grounds for Susan Clark's request for a writ of mandamus, written and signed by one of her attorneys. Near the end of the document is a paragraph in Alexander Clark's own handwriting stating that he is the father and natural guardian of the plaintiff in this case, and that Susan "sues in my name and by me as her next friend." Alexander Clark then signed the document. It is amazing to see these handwritten documents as part of my research alongside case law in printed journals.

**Supreme Court of the State of Iowa. Notification to the District Court for the County of Muscatine. 4 June 1868.**

This document served to notify the Muscatine County District Court that the Iowa Supreme Court upheld its earlier ruling that resulted in a writ of mandamus ordering the Muscatine school board to admit Susan Clark to public school. Also included in the Musser collection was a copy of the 1867 writ of mandamus. I enjoyed seeing the

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handwritten documents that were exchanged throughout the proceedings which resulted in the landmark 1868 Iowa Supreme Court ruling.

***Proceedings of the Iowa State Colored Convention Held in the City of Des Moines, Wednesday and Thursday, February 12th and 13th, 1868.* Muscatine, Iowa: Daily Journal Book and Job Printing House, 1868. State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Special Collections.**

This booklet opens with the "Call for a State Colored Convention" asking all citizens to exercise their liberty and attend the convention in support of civil rights. Following minutes of the convention (Alexander Clark served as secretary) is the speech Clark delivered upon its close. This was important to my research because it provided Clark's arguments for black male suffrage in his own words and demonstrated his influence as a spokesman for the black community.

### *Court Cases and Legislation*

**"An Act to Regulate Blacks and Mulattoes."** ***Laws of Iowa*, 1838-39.**

In 1839, this piece of legislation required that every "Negro or Mulatto" show a certificate of freedom under seal of a judge or justice and to provide a $500 bond to insure good behavior while in the territory. The act illustrated for me the oppressive conditions Alexander Clark would have encountered when he settled in Muscatine, Iowa, in 1842.

***Clark v. Board of Directors, etc.*** **14 April 1868. 24 Iowa 266.**

This is the court case that got me interested in this topic. Almost ninety years before Brown vs. The Board of Education decision in the U.S. Supreme Court, the Iowa Supreme Court ruled that school segregation is unconstitutional. Alexander Clark sued on behalf of his daughter, taking a stand not only for his daughter, but for all children regardless of race, religion, color, nationality, clothing—or any other reason that people might use to justify discrimination.

**"In the Matter of Ralph (a colored man) on Habeas Corpus." Laws of Iowa, 1838-39: 65.**

This was the first Supreme Court case in Iowa Territory. Ralph, the slave, was arrested in Iowa by men from Virginia. The case was tried in Burlington, Iowa, and the judge ruled that Ralph, having reached free soil, was not a fugitive because his owner had granted him permission to move to Iowa to work as a miner to earn money to buy his freedom. The fact that the first case considered in an Iowa court revolved around the issue of slavery illustrated for me how central this issue would be in the formative years of the state.

### *Books*

**Douglass, Frederick.** ***Life and times of Frederick Douglass, Written by Himself: His Early Life as a Slave, His Escape from Bondage, and His Complete History to the Present Time.*** **Hartford, Conn.: Park Publishing Co., 1881.**

The section of Douglass's autobiography that was most helpful in completing my project was where he described how it would be a long slow battle that would require blacks to be strong and patient in order to overcome the prejudices that kept them oppressed. "The most telling, the most killing refutation of slavery, is the presentation of an industrious, enterprising, thrifty, and intelligent free black population," Douglass wrote. Alexander Clark was an example of the type of leader that Douglass envisioned. I

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learned from this source that Douglass and Clark attended the same "colored convention" in Rochester, New York, in 1853. I found it interesting to compare the ideas of these leaders.

**Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *The Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin: Presenting the Original Facts and Documents Upon Which the Story is Founded.* London: Clarke, Beeton, and Co., 1853.**

Stowe wrote this book to defend her famous novel from criticism that it misrepresented slavery. She used an early version of Frederick Douglass's memoirs as a model for the character George, a slave who taught himself to read and write. The widely held notion of "white supremacy" held that blacks weren't smart enough to learn, and therefore were better off as slaves. Stowe, Douglass, and Alexander Clark all held that education was the key to gaining freedom and achieving equality. This helped me see why it was so important for Clark to take a stand for equal education opportunities, for his and all black children in Iowa.

*Newspapers*

**"Alexander Clark, Esq." *Cleveland Gazette* (Ohio), 24 March 1888.**

One function of African-American newspapers was to publish the good news from black communities. By contrast, newspapers owned and operated by white publishers often published African-American news only when it focused on crime or other negative aspects of their communities. I found that the *Cleveland Gazette* published news of Clark's accomplishments that were ignored by the "white" newspapers.

***The Chicago Conservator*. Microfilm.**

After reading a biographical article that described Clark as an editor who wrote with "a pen dipped in acid," I looked for a collection of *The Conservator* so I could see for myself. I soon discovered how hard it is to find copies of this paper. After many attempts, through many different libraries, the State Historical Society of Iowa was able to find a roll of microfilm that had about five issues of *The Conservator* along with many other examples of African-American newspapers. Published weekly, *The Conservator* was the first black newspaper published in Chicago. Clark owned the paper from 1882-1887.

**18 November 1882**

This issue illustrated how black papers were regarded as a battleground for "the rights of the race." This was one of the last issues published before Clark became part owner and editor of the paper with F.L. Barnett. Knowing the mission of black newspapers helped me to understand why Clark wanted to be involved with something like this.

**16 December 1882**

This issue informs readers that the Conservator will "sink or swim" depending on patronage from the black community. It asked blacks to bring any print job to *The Conservator* office instead of taking them to white owned businesses. This instance was another example of how Clark worked to unite blacks in support of black-owned business and more importantly, black causes.

**23 December 1882**

This issue's masthead shows lists "Barnett, Clark & Son, Proprietors." The front

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page carried a congratulatory message from *The Muscatine Journal*. The *Journal* said that blacks owed Clark "a debt of gratitude for his long, earnest, and eloquent championship of their rights and interests, and for his personal example in an upright and well spent life...." The message from the *Journal* also noted that Clark worked nearly four years in the *Muscatine Journal* office. Despite the prejudice still present in society there had been no difficulty having Clark employed on equal footing with whites at the *Journal*, the article stated.

**8 September 1883**

Clark was convinced that blacks needed to be educated and informed about the political and social issues of the day. This issue is filled with political news and also illustrates how Clark used *The Conservator* to challenge false statements made about blacks in white newspapers.

**18 December 1886**

This issue lists Alexander Clark as the sole proprietor and editor. It was not financially feasible to keep three people on the payroll. Clark ran a front page story asserting "why colored men should subscribe for a paper published by his own race." He noted that white papers don't usually publish news of social and domestic events within the black community. Black papers gave blacks a form to voice their opinions on issues and a means to educate readers so they could become "active, progressive, and show to the world what we are doing to advance the interest of our race." Most of all, the black press demonstrated that blacks had "the nerve and the manhood to stand up and advocate through our own journals all privileges for our race that are enjoyed by the white citizens of this country."

***Christian Recorder*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.**

African-American newspapers contain a wealth of information about the cultural life and history during the 1800s and are filled with first-hand reports of the major events and issues of the day. *The Christian Recorder*, published weekly from 1861-1902, contained secular as well as religious material and was published by the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, for "the Dissemination of Religion, Morality, Literature and Science." For researchers, it provides a glimpse of the situation for African-Americans throughout the United States. I used the following editions of this publication:

**23 February 1861. "Valley Forge and the Prayer of Washington."**

Written by Alexander Clark describing his visit to Valley Forge, this article recalls the bitter suffering of George Washington's soldiers in pursuit of liberty. Clark begged "disunionists" to recall the sacrifice made on behalf of this nation for freedom.

**18 November 1865. "Convention of Colored Iowa Soldiers."**

This article was reprinted from the *Muscatine Journal*, 6 November 1965. The first order of business for the 700 persons gathered representing the 60th U.S. Infantry (colored regiment) was to elect Alexander Clark, of Muscatine, President. This article contains the text of Clark's speech to the convention as well as his address to the people of Iowa. The main focus of both of Clark's speeches was the importance of suffrage for African-American men. "He who is worthy to be trusted with the musket can and ought to be trusted with the ballot," Clark stated. These speeches helped me understand Clark's commitment to attaining full citizenship for African-Americans. Without equality, freedom would be meaningless.

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**3 February 1866. "A Letter from Muscatine, Iowa."**

Alexander Clark wrote this letter to the editor of the *Christian Recorder* after delivering "the address and petition of the 60th U.S. Colored Infantry" to the Eleventh General Assembly of the State of Iowa, convened January 8, 1866. In this letter, Clark notes that he had secured 700 signatures from members of the colored regiment, 97 signatures from the colored citizens of Muscatine, and 235 signatures from white citizens, "making in all over one thousand names praying for universal suffrage." Clark's stand for equal rights was clear and, he hoped, successful. "I truly believe," Clark wrote, "that my trip was not in vain."

**16 November 1872. "Bishop Wayman: Notes by the Way."**

Bishop Wayman of the African Methodist Episcopal Church was on a "western" tour which included several Iowa towns. In this article, Wayman described Alexander Clark as someone who had "been a barber, and now he is a contractor, political stumper, and Sunday school superintendent; it may be said that he is one of those men tht is ready for everything that is good." The bishop also noted that "white and colored children all go to the same school." This is evidence of Clark's stand for integrated schools, a case that was decided by the Iowa Supreme Court in 1868.

**17 January, 1878. "Marriage."**

This article described the marriage of "Miss Susie Clark, the belle of Muscatine, Iowa," to The Rev. Richard Holly. Susan Clark, at age 12, had challenged the practice of segregation within public schools in Muscatine. In this wedding announcement, her father, Alexander Clark, is described as an "honorable and wealthy" man who has achieved great success. This article emphasized Clark's role and status within the African-American community in Iowa.

**21 February 1878. "No Aid to the Enemy."**

The writer of this letter looks forward to a time when "colored men will grace both branches of Congress" in the United States, despite prevalent opinions to the contrary. The letter quotes Alexander Clark: "to become hopeless is to minister aid and comfort to the enemy...." Clark's unrelenting stand for equal rights inspired African-Americans throughout the nation. "If we could keep heart, and work and pray under slavery," the writer continued, "we can surely do the same now. Nothing but the fullest possible granting of our rights will ever satisfy us. Until this is done, we intend to keep up the fight."

**21 October 1880. "Notes from the Bishops' Council."**

This article announced Alexander Clark's appointment to a delegation to represent the African Methodist Episcopal Church at the Ecumenical Conference to be held in London, England, in August, 1881. This notice helped me understand Clark's role and influence as a leader beyond his hometown and church in Muscatine, Iowa.

**10 November 1881. "A Letter from Alexander Clark."**

Representing the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Alexander Clark was a delegate to the Ecumenical Conference in London, England, in 1881. This letter, printed in the *Christian Recorder*, describes Clark's trip. "Our sail was pleasant and free from that criminal prejudice caste that I and all my race meet when traveling in our boasted land of liberty," Clark wrote. Clark fought against tangible barriers to equality in his efforts to secure black suffrage and integrated schools in Iowa. Taking

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a stand for equality was even more challenging when facing intangible barriers such as the prejudice and stereotypes that African-Americans faced in the United States. At this ecumenical conference, Clark noted, "the color line was unknown."

**10 January, 1884. "Delegates to the General Conference."**
Methodist churches are organized in a connectional system, of which the highest governing body is the General Conference. This article notes that Alexander Clark was elected as a delegate to the General Conference from the Iowa Conference, emphasizing for me his leadership role within the church and society. The article also noted some of Clark's accomplishments as a publisher and editor.

**26 June 1884.**
Announcement of Alexander Clark's graduation from the Law Department of the University of Iowa. Alexander Clark was the second black person, after his son, to graduate from the University of Iowa Law School—and he was 58 years old at the time. His trailblazing in education continued after the landmark supreme court case that opened public schools in Iowa to children of all races.

**11 August 1887.**
Announcement that Alexander Clark is practicing law in Chicago. This article helped me track Clark's career after he sold *The Chicago Conservator*. He maintained residences in Chicago and Muscatine.

**18 August 1887.**
Article announcing that "Lawyer Alexander Clark, 'of Muscatine,' is one of the most illustrious examples of business success that the race has to present.

**18 August 1887. "Editorial Correspondence."**
This article described the proceedings of the annual conference of the African Methodist Episcopal church, noting that Hon. Alexander Clark was one of the chief speakers. This article helped me understand Clark's influence within the church, which began when he and three other men founded the A.M.E. congregation in Muscatine in 1849.

***Daily State Register*, Des Moines, Iowa.**
I read through many months of this newspaper on microfilm at Iowa State University's Parks Library in Ames, Iowa. Newspaper articles provided insight into the events of this turbulent time in Iowa civil rights history and also showed me how black issues and events were covered at the time. Of the articles I read, these were the most helpful in my research:

**6 February 1868. "Negrophobia."**
This article illustrates the climate of prejudice and fear that I have read about in other sources. It describes how "a colored boy of irreproachable character" who had attended a colored school in Des Moines, Iowa, wanted to "go up higher" and was admitted to the public school. "Negro-haters became unbearable," and the director of the school expelled the black student, bowing to pressure from white people believed that education would change the "normal" ignorant state of the Negro. This article demonstrated for me how the conflict arising from integration of public schools was in the forefront of the debate about equality for blacks in Iowa.

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**13 February 1868. "Colored People's State Convention."**

This article announced the beginning of the "first State Convention of the colored people of Iowa." Alexander Clark was elected secretary and appointed to prepare an address to the people of Iowa. I also learned from this article that Henry O'Conner, attorney general of Iowa at the time, attended the convention and was one of the featured speakers. (O'Conner, also from Muscatine and a member of the abolitionist Congregational church, served as one of Clark's lawyers in the lawsuit against the Muscatine school board.)

**14 February 1868. "Colored People's State Convention."**

This article lists resolutions of the convention and commends Alexander Clark for his "great and noble act in defending the rights of our children to be admitted into the Public Schools of the State." The action taken by this convention showed me that equality in education was an important issue for blacks across the state—not an isolated interest of Alexander Clark in Muscatine. The convention also commended Attorney General O'Conner for his support in submitting the question of suffrage to voters in the next general election. I learned from daily news coverage of this convention that the white press at the time considered it a significant event: reports of the convention appeared on the front page next to reports of the daily proceedings of the Iowa legislature.

**15 February 1868. "Colored People's State Convention."**

Alexander Clark prepared an address to the people of Iowa on behalf of the convention, and *The Daily State Register* published the address in its entirety. Clark became known as "the colored orator of the west," and this article was the first source I discovered during my research that provided me with the text of one of Clark's speeches. (The version printed in *The Daily State Register* has a significant typographical error that Clark corrected when the speech was published in pamphlet form and distributed after the convention. The speech begins with an appeal to the people of Iowa for "sympathy and aid in securing those rights and privileges which belong to us as free men." The newspaper incorrectly printed the word "learning" in place of "securing.")

**27 February 1868. "Iowa Democratic State Convention."**

This article listed the proceedings and resolutions of the Democratic State Convention held in Des Moines in the weeks following the Colored Convention. One resolution of the Democratic Party in particular helped me understand the black community's allegiance to the Republican Party in Iowa at the time: "*Resolved*. That we are opposed to conferring the right of suffrage upon the negroes in Iowa, and we deny the right of the general government to interfere with the question of suffrage in any of the states of the Union."

**17 March 1868. "Rev. S.T. Wells—A Life of Storm and Incident."**

Rev. Wells, who escaped slavery as a young man, fled to Canada. There he found work, friends, and safety, but according to the article, "felt that he was on foreign soil and longed to be back again in the country that gave him birth." This reinforced an idea that Alexander Clark also expressed—that despite its flaws, blacks born in the U.S. considered this country their home and wanted to remain and work to correct the injustices they suffered. Wells returned to the U.S. and became pastor of a black church in Des Moines that also housed "a colored school" in its basement. Also of

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interest to me was the writer's assessment of the black community in Des Moines (the writer identified himself as an occasional visitor of Des Moines who was white). He described Des Moines' black community as "almost without exception industrious, prudent, and altogether an unobjectionable class of inhabitants."

**4 December 1880. "The State Canvass."**

This article announced results of the proposition to strike the word "white" out of its "last sulking place in the Iowa Constitution." By a vote of 90,237 for and 51,943 against, Iowa voters removed the word "white" from the Constitution's qualification for members of the Legislature. Finally, there were no legal barriers standing in the way of blacks' participation in the government of the state of Iowa.

**"Emancipation Anniversary Celebration by the Colored People." *Chicago Tribune*. 2 August 1867: 1.**

This article describes a celebration attended by 200 "negroes" on the Capitol grounds in Des Moines, Iowa. Alexander Clark of Muscatine delivered the oration. This illustrated his role in the ongoing work toward equality for the "colored people of Iowa" as the article was published before blacks obtained suffrage and equal education in Iowa.

**"Free Soil Meeting in Orange Co., N.C." *The National Era,* Washington, D.C., Vol. II, No. 94 (19 October 1948): 167.**

This was one of the first published articles I found connecting Alexander Clark, who was never a slave, to efforts to take a stand against slavery. White newspapers in North Carolina refused to publish proceedings of the Free Soil Party meetings. The *Era* published an account of a meeting held on September 16, 1848, expressing the views of "peaceful citizens" who were no longer satisfied with the policies of the existing political parties in North Carolina. Members of the Free Soil movement in North Carolina, "dwelling in the midst of the evil," hoped to arrest the spread of slavery. Alexander Clark was one of fifty delegates who signed the list of resolutions drafted at this convention.

**Grauvest, Ann. "Recreating a way of Life: Restoration Revives Muscatine Home's Century-old Flavor." *Quad-City Times*, 23 September 1979.**

Kent Sissel bought Alexander Clark's house in 1979. The brick house was 101 years old and had been moved up the street from its original location to make way for a senior citizen apartment building. The article describes the saga of saving the house which was in very poor condition inside and out. Clark's house was an eyesore, and when the historical society that had worked to save the structure could not raise the money needed to restore it, the Muscatine City Council ordered that it be sold—or torn down. This article helped me understand the effort required to save an historic site that was standing in the way of "progress."

**"Hon. Alexander Clark." *Cleveland Gazette* (Ohio), 11 October 1890.**

This article, in a black newspaper, documents Alexander Clark's appointment as Minister to Liberia by President Harrison. Aside from Clark's hometown newspaper, *The Muscatine Journal*, the white press paid little attention to this honor, which at the time was the highest appointed position offered to a black man. This substantiates Dr. Bergmann's contention that "as the emotions of the Civil War era cooled and Negroes gradually took their place in the daily lives of northern communities, the special interest and ready sympathy of earlier days waned.... By the late eighties reports concerning Negroes are nearly always found on the page devoted to crimes...."

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**"Iowa."** ***New York Times.*** **29 May 1872: 2.**

This brief article named Iowa's delegates to the Republican National convention. Among the names was Alexander Clark, who was elected as a delegate at large. In the list of names the distinction was made that he was a member of the "colored" population in Iowa.

***Muscatine Journal,*** **Muscatine, Iowa. (Microfilm)**

**8 January 1869.**

Announcement that Alexander Clark was appointed delegate-at-large for the state to attend the National Colored Convention in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the convention was to "secure impartial suffrage throughout the United States." This demonstrated that, having secured the right to vote for black men in Iowa, Clark was continuing his stand for equality at the national level.

**22 January 1869.**

Letter to the Editor from Alexander Clark. A delegate to the National Convention of Colored Men in Washington, D.C., Clark explained that "the first statesmen of the nation are with us and their...eloquence is heard in tones of thunder on the great question of manhood suffrage, liberty, and justice." Clark introduced Gov. Merrill, Sen. James Harlan, and Senator James Grimes of Iowa who "responded with eloquent speeches." Clark lists other white elected officials who attended the convention to support suffrage, the great question of the day. I also learned from this article that Clark continued his stand for equal treatment of blacks through his appointment to a committee to address Congress regarding the "unfair and unjust discrimination made in the payment of bounties to colored soldiers who were slaves prior to 1861."

**26 May 1986.**

Photograph of Alexander Clark's gravesite. Clark's grave is marked by a distinctive tall, white monument. The photo of Sunday school students from Clark's former A.M.E. church placing flowers on his grave helped me find the gravesite in Greenwood Cemetery, Muscatine, Iowa, after visiting Clark's house.

**"Our Minister to Liberia Dead."** ***Washington Post.*** **29 June 1891: 1.**

This was a brief mention of Clark's death in Monrovia, Liberia on 3 June 1891. The death notice was careful to mention that Clark was a man of color. Clark spent his life stand against inequality, but even in his death he was unable escape the identification of race in the white press.

**"Personal."** ***Chicago Tribune.*** **16 May 1873: 4.**

The column noted that "Alexander Clark (colored), of Muscatine, Iowa," declined an appointment to be ambassador to Haiti because it was "not sufficiently remunerative." Clark turned down his first presidential appointment because of its low salary; eventually Fredrick Douglass took this appointment. This article showed how influential Alexander Clark was in that he could decline one presidential appointment and still be offered another one.

**"The Negro Case."** ***The Bloomington Herald,*** **Bloomington, Iowa. 18 November 1840.**

Muscatine, Iowa, was originally called Bloomington, and this article predates the

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change in name. The article describes a case that came before the legal tribunal determine whether a slave brought into Iowa was free. Better details of this case are found in other sources, but the important part of this source was the newspapers declaration of its position: "One thing we are sure of, the moral sense of this community [will not] long tolerate the persecution of any man, black or white. Whom the law makes free, is free, and that he that is unwilling to support the law, when it frees a man, is unfit to be a freeman himself...."

**Rosenberg, Ralph. "Rededicate Ourselves to Ending Discrimination." *The Des Moines Register*, 19 July 2005.**

Rosenberg's editorial looks back at civil rights victories in Iowa and offers a timely reminder that "the legacy of injustice experienced by some Americans [is] a legacy that will not—and should not—go away." His analysis helped me see that civil rights victories in earlier times did not solve discrimination for all times. This is an important concept because it helped me appreciate the scope Alexander Clarks accomplishments despite the fact that his victories did not "solve" the civil rights problem. I considered it a primary source because it offered insight into current civil rights issues and how efforts continue to build upon the foundation of early civil rights victories.

**"Rousing Republican Meeting at Des Moines." *Chicago Tribune*. 11 October 1869: 2**

This article summarizes a Republican meeting held in Des Moines where Alexander Clark, "the colored speaker from Muscatine" gave the closing address. According to the article, "the speech of Mr. Clark was well delivered, full of thought, replete with argument, and characterized with many good points. He greatly surpassed the expectations of the audience and put colored stock up to par." This article supported Clark's reputation and designation, as the "Colored Orator of the West." Clark, the article continued, "...has fully established his reputation as the Fred Douglass of Iowa."

**Untitled Column. *Chicago Tribune*. 23 August 1869: 2.**

This column recapped news from the northwest, including Iowa. The column quotes a 17 August 1869 article from *The Muscatine Journal*: "For the first time, we believe, in the history of Muscatine, a colored man to-day formed part of a jury in a court case." The article identified the juror as Alexander Clark and speculated that this was the first time that a black man served on a jury. This demonstrated that Iowa's black laws were being dismantled and that Clark took every opportunity to escape the limitations previously forced on blacks in society.

***Periodicals***

**"An Iowa Fugitive Slave Case, In the Supreme Court, July, 1839." Decision Reprinted in *Annals of Iowa* 2 (October 1896): 531-39.**

Iowa's Territorial Supreme Court rendered its first published decision in *The Matter of Ralph (a colored man) on Habeas Corpus*. This article is a reprint of the decision that also includes the arguments made by both sides in transcript form. It was fascinating to read the full text of the arguments, not simply the ruling.

**"Blacks and Mulattoes: An Act to Regulate Blacks and Mulattoes." *The Statute Laws of the Territory of Iowa, 1838-39*. Dubuque: Russell & Reeves, 1839. Reprinted in *Annals of Iowa* 3 (April 1897): 145-47.**

The Iowa territorial legislature enacted a law in 1839 prohibiting anyone of a "black

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race" from settling in Iowa unless they could produce a certificate of Freedom and a $500 bond. This act illustrated for me that being anti-slavery—which most Iowans were—did not necessarily mean being in favor of civil rights for blacks. I classified this article as a primary source because it was a reprint of the original legislation.

**"Contemporary Editorial Opinion of the 1857 Constitution."** ***Iowa Journal of History*** **55 (April 1957): 115-146.**

Reprinted within this article were editorials and "letters to the editor" published in seven Iowa newspapers in the months preceding the August 1857 vote on the new constitution. Iowa—and the nation—was filled with strife over the issue of slavery, and the provision in the 1857 constitution that would remove the word "white" from the section on voter eligibility invited a great deal of comment and criticism. I classified this as a primary source because each of the numerous editorials and letters to the editor was reprinted in its entirety. This collection helped me understand the opposing viewpoints in the debate over black suffrage in Iowa.

***Journal of the House of Representatives*****, 1855.**

I found this source at the State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City and it provided me with a record of the action taken on Alexander Clark's petition to overturn Iowa's 1851 Exclusionary Law. Representatives voted 39 to 26 to table the petition and take no action at all. The Exclusionary Act was a matter of record but had never really been enforced since census data shows blacks continued to move into Iowa even after it was passed. Clark probably knew that the law was not enforced, but saw wiping it off the books as a place to start in taking a stand for civil rights in Iowa.

***Internet***

**Douglass, Frederick. "Address of the Colored National Convention to the People of the United States, 1853." On-line: <http://www.bowdoin.edu/~prael/lesson/nc53.htm> 12 March 2005.**

Free blacks were denied access to the mechanisms of formal politics, so they organized themselves into conventions where they debated the problems they confronted, considered options for their remedy, and addressed a broader public with their concerns. Alexander Clark attended the convention in Rochester, N.Y., in 1853. This address, written and delivered by Frederick Douglass, is a good example of the black protest tradition prior to the Civil War—it demands redress through appeal to the nation's most cherished principles of freedom and liberty.

**"National Convention of the free people of color of the United States, 1853." On-line: <http://people.hofstra.edu/htm> 12 March 2005.**

From the archives of Hofstra University in Hempstead, NY, this document is an invitation to the National Convention of the free people of color of the United States in Rochester, NY, on 6 July 1853. "We have gross and flagrant wrongs against which, if we are men of spirit, we are bound to protest. We have high and holy rights..." Alexander Clark responded to this invitation and attended the convention. This convention could have been what inspired Clark and shaped the stands he took to gain civil rights in Iowa.

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## — Secondary Sources —

### *Interviews*

**Brodnax, David. Telephone interview by the author, 14 March 2006.**

Broadnax is an assistant professor of history at Trinity Christian College in Illinois whose graduate thesis at Northwestern University was "The African American Struggle for Equal Citizenship in Iowa, 1860-1900." We discussed Alexander Clark's role in the struggle for citizenship and why Clark would accept a diplomatic appointment to Liberia when he was against colonization.

**Clark, Dan. Interview by the author, 8 March 2006.**

I interviewed Dan Clark while in Muscatine, Iowa. His understanding of local history and the early settlers of Muscatine helped provide context for Alexander Clark's life and work in this Mississippi River town that was once the "capital of Afro-American Iowa." Dan Clark (no relation to Alexander) maintains the "alexanderclark.org" web-site.

**Sissel, Kent. Interview by the author, 8 March 2006.**

Mr. Sissel rescued Alexander Clark's dilapidated brick house when it was about to be demolished as an eye-sore. Sissel holds a master's degree in interior design, textile design, and historic architecture and taught at Florida State University, the University of Iowa, and Michigan State University before being named architectural historian and coordinator of a survey of central Iowa architecture. He restored Clark's home and, now retired, lives in one-half of the double house. Our conversation helped me understand the work and the importance of preserving historic sites. We have remained in contact and he has helped me locate many sources valuable to my research. I took the photograph of Alexander Clark's house that appears in my paper after meeting Mr. Sissel in his home for this interview.

### *Periodicals*

**"African-American Iowans: 1830s-1970s." *The Goldfinch* 16 (Summer 1995).**

The entire issue of this publication was devoted to the contributions African-Americans have made to the history of Iowa. I first read about Iowa's "Black Codes" of the 1830s and 1840s—similar to Black Laws enacted in the South after the Civil War—in the "Iowa Timeline" article. A brief article in *The Goldfinch* introduced me to Alexander Clark, convincing me that he would be a perfect topic for this year's NHD theme because of the stand he took to demand equal educational opportunities for all students in Iowa.

**"Alexander Clark." *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* 19 (1921): 347.**

This very brief article helped me understand how quickly Clark's accomplishments were ignored or forgotten. The article said that Clark "seemed to have been considered a leader in [the negroes'] efforts to secure equal political rights." This article was significant for what it overlooked. There was no mention of Clark's role in desegregating Iowa schools, earning equal pensions for black Civil War soldiers, achieving suffrage, or the prominent position he occupied in the Iowa Republican Party.

**Beitz, Ruth. "Going Up to Glory Very Slow." *Iowan* 16 (Spring 1968): 42-45, 49-50, 54.**

Beitz's article was a fun read (especially after some of the sources which explore the intricacies of political history). In it she discussed the feelings that many early black

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settlers expressed about living in Iowa. Her interviews with many ex-slaves helped me understand the complex reasons that they gave for moving to Iowa.

**Berrier, G. Galin. "The Negro Suffrage Issue in Iowa—1865-1868." *Annals of Iowa* 39 (Spring 1968): 241-261.**

Berrier's article explained the "negro suffrage issue" in great depth. He described the effects black suffrage had on elections after the Civil War and, most importantly for my research, offered evidence that the "adoption of Negro suffrage by substantial majorities in Iowa and Minnesota in 1868 was a major boost" toward the movement for the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

**Cooper, Arnie. "A Stony Road: Black Education in Iowa, 1838-1860." *Annals of Iowa* 48 (Winter/Spring 1986): 113-134.**

Cooper examined the importance of education as an issue in Iowa and details the obstacles blacks in Iowa had to overcome in order to gain access to quality education. Iowa's black codes excluded persons of color from public schools, but individual communities were not always as strict. "First-hand familiarity softened decision-making," he wrote. Perhaps this is why the Muscatine District Court was quick to issue a writ of mandamus in response to Alexander Clark's lawsuit. After studying so many sources that told about Iowa's black codes, Cooper helped me see that "state legislation does not necessarily define local behavior."

**DeMouth, Wayne and Joan Liffring. "Where the Negro Stands in Iowa." *Iowan* 10 (Fall 1961): 2-11.**

Written as "the limelight grows brighter on the problems of the Negro in the South," DeMouth and Liffring ask readers to consider the status of blacks in Iowa in 1961. According to the authors, "the Negro problem...centers on a basic unwillingness to accept him as an equal citizen." Their examination of employment, housing, and public accommodations helped me see that early civil rights victories in Iowa did not eliminate injustice altogether. This helped me develop a more realistic understanding of Alexander Clark's accomplishments and how much work was still to be done.

**Dykstra, Robert R. "Dr. Emerson's Sam: Black Iowans Before the Civil War." *Palimpsest* 63 (1982): 66-82.**

Dykstra's article described the climate in Iowa for blacks prior to the Civil War. Even though Iowa was a free territory, many settlers coming from the south brought their slaves with them, including Iowa's first territorial governor. The article helped me understand the conflict that existed between whites in Iowa over the issue of freedom for blacks.

**Dykstra, Robert R. "The Issue Squarely Met: Toward an Explanation of Iowans' Racial Attitudes, 1865-1868." *Annals of Iowa* 47 (1984): 430-50.**

In this article, Dykstra traces the evolution of Iowa's political landscape as it went from one of the most racist states to one that was first to grant rights of citizenship to blacks. His article helped me to see how changing beliefs and attitudes contribute to transforming public policy. Dykstra challenges readers to see that racial inequity is still an "important unresolved problem." He encourages us to look at the positive examples provided in the first years after the Civil War when Iowa's Republican leaders at the time entered a "political season in which—against apparently formidable odds—it mustered the moral courage to do justice in a matter of race."

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**Dykstra, Robert R. "White Men, Black Laws: Territorial Iowans and Civil Rights, 1883-1843." *Annals of Iowa* 46 (1982): 403-440.**

This article provided an in-depth look at Iowa's antebellum Black Codes. He explained that the majority of the political leaders in Iowa Territory were from states where slavery persisted until the Civil War. They brought their racist attitudes to Iowa and embedded them in Iowa's territorial laws and first state constitution. This article sets the stage for the civil rights battles to come.

**Jackson, Marilyn. "Alexander Clark: A Rediscovered Black Leader." *Iowan* 23 (Spring 1975): 43-52.**

Jackson wrote this biographical article stating that Clark had been "all but forgotten by his home of Muscatine" until a 1974 survey of historic homes pinpointed Clark's brick house. "In the ensuing battle of preservation versus progress, the full range of his accomplishments became public," Jackson stated. Her overview of Clark's life illustrated the stands he took for civil rights and helped me see the important role a historic site can play in preserving history.

**Gallaher, Ruth A. "Slavery in Iowa." *Palimpsest* 28 (May 1947): 158-160.**

Gallaher's article acknowledges that even though Iowa was a free state, "the frontier paid scant attention to legal technicalities." She listed known incidents of slaves being kept in Iowa through the 1830s-1850s. This information helped me understand the climate toward blacks when Alexander Clark came to Iowa.

**Hill, James. "Migration of Blacks to Iowa, 1820-1960." *The Journal of Negro History* 66 (Winter 1981-82): 289-303.**

One of the things that many Iowans, including early lawmakers, feared was that if Iowa was lenient toward blacks, the state would be inundated with manumitted slaves. This atmosphere of fear was one of the many obstacles early black leaders, including Alexander Clark, had to overcome. Hill concluded that Iowa's law prohibiting the settling of free blacks and mulattoes was not really enforced based on evidence of steady in-migration of blacks to Iowa during the 1850s. He used detailed tables to illustrate the flow of blacks into Iowa. Examining his research helped me come to the conclusion that the fears expressed by Iowans in the 1800s were groundless.

**Parish, John C. "An Early Fugitive Slave Case West of the Mississippi River." *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* 6 (Jan. 1908): 88-95.**

Parish's article helped me understand the complicated nature of Iowa's status as a free state, first under the jurisdiction of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 and then the Missouri Compromise of 1820. Congress organized the Territory of Iowa in 1838, and Iowa later became "the first free State in the Louisiana Purchase." Parish goes on to provide details about the case of Ralph in 1839.

**Pelzer, Louis. "The Negro and Slavery in Early Iowa." *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* 2 (1904): 471-484.**

Pelzer illustrates how deeply the idea of slavery was rooted in many Iowans prior to and in the early years of statehood. He also explained how the sentiments changed as the state legislature cycled through representatives. This illustration of the changing views in Iowa's past helped me to see how the progressive people changed the course of Iowa politics in subsequent years.

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**Peterson, Henry K. "The First Decision Rendered by the Supreme Court of Iowa." *Annals of Iowa* 34 (April 1958): 304-307.**

Peterson was an Iowa Supreme Court justice when he wrote this article. His analysis from this perspective helped me understand the impact of the Iowa Territorial Supreme Court's decision *In the Matter of Ralph (A Colored Man), on Habeas Corpus*.

***The Phylaxis*. Volume II, Number 2. Jefferson City, Mo., March 1975.**

This publication of the Prentice Hall Freemasons describes how Clark became a Mason and rose to grand master of the colored Masons in the jurisdiction that included Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Mississippi. Other biographical information in the article about Clark's early life comes from the entry in the 1878 *U.S. Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery* with one major detail changed: the biographical dictionary attributed Clark's intelligence and abilities to the fact that he was one-third Irish. The Mason's publication flips the nationalities so that his brilliance is attributed to his African heritage. This article also supplied information about Clark's time as owner and publisher of *The Chicago Conservator*.

**Savage, W. Sherman. "The Negro in Politics in Kansas and Iowa." *Negro History Bulletin* 25 (1962): 110-111, 113.**

This article compares the similarities between the political involvement of blacks in Kansas and Iowa. I found this helpful because it gave me perspective on how Iowa's black population became involved in the political life of the state. Savage identifies Alexander Clark as central to the fight for "the rights of Negroes."

**Schwalm, Leslie A. "History Remembered: Scholar Recounts the North's Own Conflicts Over Emancipation, Black Migration." *Arts & Sciences* Magazine (University of Iowa College of Liberal Arts), Fall 2002: 16-17.**

Professor Schwalm's article discussed "the historian's role in advocating for a more rigorous, scholarly approach to history as an antidote to the popular myths embraced by so many who love the [Civil War]." One myth I've encountered in my own education casts those in the North as the heroes in the struggle and those in the South as the villains. Schwalm's article helped me understand that there was great conflict above the Mason-Dixon Line between northerners who thought African-Americans should be deprived of basic civil, political, and social rights and privileges and others who believed that African-Americans should have "full and uncompromised national citizenship." I did not understand the depth of this conflict before conducting research on Alexander Clark and efforts to achieve equality for African-Americans.

**Wubben, Hubert H. "Further Reflections on the Iowa Black Suffrage Victory." *Annals of Iowa* 47 (1984): 544-46.**

In this article, written as an editorial that outlines the author's beliefs and opinions, Wubben directly addresses many of Robert Dykstra's positions in other articles I have used in this research. His analysis helped me better understand the issues and arguments surrounding Iowa's early civil rights debates.

**Wubben, Hubert H. "The Uncertain Trumpet: Iowa Republicans and Black Suffrage, 1860-1868." *Annals of Iowa* 47 (1984): 409-429.**

Wubben's article helped me understand the motivations of Iowans who, in 1868, voted to grant black suffrage. It was not as simple as merely "doing the right thing for the right reason." It also was not as cynical as the right action but without principle. His

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analysis helped me understand the complicated, and sometimes contradictory, attitudes of voters in Iowa following the Civil War.

*Books*

**"Alexander Clark, Muscatine." In *The United States Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery of Eminent and Self-made Men: Iowa Volume*. Chicago and New York: American Biographical Publishing Company, 1878: 536-541.**

This source provided basic biographical information about Alexander Clark along with the photograph I used in my paper. Clark's entry describes his parentage and concludes that he was "two-thirds African and one-third Irish." The writer went on to explain that it was to Clark's Irish heritage that he owed his brilliance and character. Besides being laughable, this statement illustrated the negative stereotypes that blacks endured—and when the stereotype was proven inaccurate, whites often found a way to explain it away.

**Bergmann, Leola Nelson. *The Negro in Iowa*. Iowa City: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1969.**

Dr. Bergman's study was first published in 1948 as an attempt to articulate the contributions made by African-Americans to the early history of Iowa. She acknowledges that many American historians have usually written the history of this country from the view of the dominant Anglo-Saxon group. Her study helped me to understand how important it is to go beneath the surface to hear the voices of those whose impacts on history were not recorded equally because of the color of their skin.

**Berwanger, Eugene H. *The Frontier Against Slavery: Western Anti-Negro Prejudice and the Slavery Extension Controversy*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1967.**

Berwanger uses newspaper accounts, political speeches, correspondence, and legal documents to argue that the expansion of slavery was limited more by "whites only" sentiments of pioneers than by humanitarian concerns for African Americans. For my research, the discussion in chapter two, "Northwest of the Ohio, 1824-60," was helpful in explaining how prejudice against African Americans shaped laws and discriminatory practices in Iowa.

**Butcher, Margaret Just. *The Negro in American Culture*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969.**

Butcher's book helped me answer a question that troubled me throughout my research—why court victories such as Alexander Clark's did not solve the problem of segregation and discrimination? Did his victories matter in the long run since they did not put a final end to the ideas that fed prejudice and hatred against blacks? Butcher believed that early victories prepared a foundation in law and in people's minds (blacks and whites alike) for equality. Later civil rights victories were built upon the foundation laid by Clark and other early African-American leaders.

**Cole, Cyrenus. *Iowa Through the Years*. Iowa City: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1940.**

Cole's book was written as a comprehensive volume of the first hundred years Iowa history. His discussions of the development of Iowa's constitution helped me understand how important "the negro question" was in the formative years of Iowa's statehood. Reading this book helped me grasp the more complicated issues that the framers of Iowa's constitution had to deal with when writing it.

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**Dykstra, Robert R.** ***Bright Radical Star: Black Freedom and White Supremacy on the Hawkeye Frontier.*** **Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993.**

In *Bright Radical Star*, Dykstra traces the evolution of frontier Iowa from what he describes as "the most racist free state in the antebellum Union" to one of the most "outspokenly egalitarian." His book weaves together the social, legal, constitutional, and political history, providing me with a better understanding of the climate that existed in Iowa when Alexander Clark lived and worked for equal rights for African-Americans.

**Hawthorne, Frances E.** ***African Americans in Iowa: A Chronicle of Contributions, 1830-1992.*** **Des Moines, Iowa: Iowa Humanities Board, 1992.**

This publication was written as an expanded timeline which helped me put my topic in context within the early years of African American contributions to Iowa history. Hawthorne's bibliography also pointed me toward several helpful articles.

***History of Muscatine County.*** **Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1897.**

This volume contained a biography of Alexander Clark, described as "the colored orator of the West," that was very helpful in the development of my paper. In the section describing churches in the county, Alexander Clark's role in establishing the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Muscatine was highlighted, along with his role as Recording Steward and Superintendent of Sabbath school. Clark's children were listed as graduates of the local high school, underscoring Clark's victory in ending school segregation in Iowa.

**Katz, William Loren.** ***Black Pioneers: An Untold Story.*** **New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1999.**

The author describes how African-American pioneers in the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys became freedom fighters, taking stands against "Black Laws" and slavehunters, creating unique forms of protest to ensure their advancement. The chapters on Iowa and Minnesota helped me understand how the advancements toward civil rights in these states created momentum for the passage of the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing suffrage to all men regardless of race. Katz's book also documented the struggles black pioneers, including Alexander Clark, had to overcome in their quest for equality.

**Richard, Lord Acton and Patricia Nassif Acton.** ***To Go Free: A Treasury of Iowa's Legal Heritage.*** **Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1995.**

The Actons' book analyzes Iowa's legal history, pointing out that law is more than constitutions, codes, and court decisions. Viewed through the lens of history, the authors view law as the living product of individuals; its meaning defined within "the ever-changing contours of family, society, and government." While the book contains many primary source documents and court decisions related to my topic, I listed it as a secondary source because their analysis helped me understand how important the debate surrounding the legal status of former slaves was in the years following the Civil War, and how this debate played out in courts in Iowa and across the nation.

**Schwieder, Dorothy.** ***Iowa: The Middle Land.*** **Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1996.**

Shwieder's book provided the broader context about the time when Alexander Clark lived in Iowa. She highlights his efforts to take a stand for racial equality and civil rights, almost one hundred years before the national movement. I used this source as a tool to locate other books, articles, and documents that pertained to my topic.

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**Shambaugh, Benjamin F. *The Constitutions of Iowa*. Iowa City: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1934.**

This volume was an important source for my paper because it traced the development of Iowa's Constitutions and helped me understand the debate surrounding civil rights for blacks in Iowa.

**Silag, Bill, ed. *Outside In: African-American History in Iowa, 1838-2000*. Des Moines: State Historical Society of Iowa, 2001.**

This book helps to fill the void in historical publications that left African-Americans out of the story of this state. One focus of this book is to illustrate the "struggle of black Iowans to claim their rights as citizens," beginning with the groundbreaking legal victories of Alexander Clark. This work helped me see how, even in a northern state, blacks were not truly free; they had to work hard to overcome discrimination and prejudice.

*Newspapers*

**Byrd, Stephen. "Seminar Takes Audience on a Journey through Iowa's Black History." Muscatine Journal, 23 February 2004.**

Byrd's article introduced me to David Brodnax, who at the time was a doctoral student at Northwestern University conducting seminars related to his dissertation about African-Americans in Iowa during the 19th century. Kent Sissel, whom I had previously interviewed, provided me with Brodnax's contact information and arranged for me to see a videotape of the February 2004 seminar.

**Longden, Tom. "Clark Won Prominence, Respect as a Civil Rights Leader. *The Des Moines Register*, 12 February 2006.**

This recent feature story illustrates how people have once again become interested in Clark's accomplishments largely because the attention centered on preserving his house, built in 1868, in Muscatine. I learned from this article that Kent Sissel restored, and now lives in the Clark house. He hopes the house will someday become a research center and museum.

**"Muscatine Negro Served Nation as Consul to Liberia." *Muscatine Journal*, 31 May 1940.**

Printed in the Centennial Edition of the *Muscatine Journal*, this article focuses on Alexander Clark's selection for a diplomatic position in Liberia. The article quoted *Journal* articles that appeared at the time of Clark's appointment and offered details of the reception held in his honor. This contradicted a statement made in Dr. Leola Bergmann's book that white newspapers—even in Clark's home state—did not cover his appointment. The article also helped me understand how prominent a position Clark held in the Muscatine community.

**Rugg, Peter. "Muscatine Arts Center Acquires Prized Possession." *Muscatine Journal*, 20 May 2005.**

Rugg's article alerted me to the fact that I could locate the original document signed by President Benjamin Harrison designating Alexander Clark as U.S. Minister to Liberia at the Muscatine Art Center.

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*Videotape*

**Brodnax, David. "Black Hawkeyes." Videotaped lecture, 21 February 2004. Musser Public Library, Muscatine, Iowa.**

Dr. Brodnax's lecture reinforced the idea that blacks in the 1800s were instrumental in forging the young and growing state of Iowa. Black Iowans contributed significantly to the economy by providing labor for coal mining and railroad expansion, both vital to the time. Most importantly, they helped define and redefine the meaning of citizenship in Iowa in their quest for equality. Brodnax explained how Alexander Clark played an integral role in improving race relations in Iowa and how Clark's influence had impact nationwide.

*Internet Sources*

**American Colonization Society Collection (Prints and Photographs Reading Room). On-line: < http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/coll/007-b.html > (5 April 2005).**

The Library of Congress' collection of photographs and documents helped me to understand the complex issue of colonization for freed U.S. slaves and how blacks and whites alike were divided in the stands they took on this issue. While the photos and documents themselves would be primary sources, for my research I was most interested in the commentary that accompanied the documents, so I classified this as a secondary source.

**Clark, Daniel G. "Alexander Clark of Muscatine, Iowa." On-line: <http://muscatine-tours.com/alexanderclark/index.html> (12 September 2005).**

This site led me to many sources that were very important to my paper. Through it, I found contact information for Mr. Kent Sissel, who led the fight to put the Clark House on the National Register of Historic Places. This site also led me to the holdings of the Muscatine Public Library concerning Alexander Clark, as well as the Muscatine Art Center which holds the original document announcing Clark's appointment to Liberia.

**"Colonization: The African-American Mosaic" (Library of Congress Exhibition). On-line: < http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/African/afam002.html > (5 April 2005).**

The idea of colonization for freed U.S. slaves was one of controversy. The on-line material related to this Library of Congress exhibition helped me understand various opinions concerning the issue of colonization. The American Colonization Society was formed in 1817 to send freed slaves to Africa as an alternative to emancipation in the United States. Liberia on the west coast of Africa was established as a colony for this purpose. Some blacks supported colonization and emigration efforts because they thought that black Americans would never receive justice in the U.S. Others believed African-Americans should remain in the U.S. to fight against slavery and for full citizenship rights. Among whites, many supported colonization because it would rid the country of the "Negro problem." Others believed blacks would be happier in Africa where they would not have to endure racial segregation. This information provided me with the understanding of the context in which Alexander Clark had to decide whether or not to accept President Harrison's appointment as Ambassador to Liberia. Clark was personally against colonization, but accepted the position because at that time it was the highest post ever offered to a black man.

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